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Who is the Strong Man of the War in America?

Wilson Roosevelt
Bryan Taft

Mangasarian
M. M. MANGASARIAN

REPORT OF A LECTURE DELIVERED
BEFORE THE
INDEPENDENT RELIGIOUS SOCIETY

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Answers - (Two Volumes)

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Who is the Strong Man of the War in America?

Criticism may be described as a mental antiseptic. It is a preventive of infection—the infection of error. The principal aim of criticism, however, is to protect thought from stagnation. To criticise means to agitate, and agitation keeps our ideas under a constant stream of fresh air and light. Even when the criticism is unjust, it is better than no criticism at all. If a religion or a government, or an institution is never criticised, it is a proof that it is not sufficiently alive to interest people. If a man has no enemies, it may be interpreted as a sign that he has no convictions. We are entitled to protection against misrepresentation, and to damages for libel, or slander, but to ask for protection against criticism for our work or platform or party or creed, is to admit the weakness of our cause.

The most freely and frequently criticised institution in this country is the government. But the government itself is the greatest of critics. The government is always investigating something or somebody—always examining or placing officials on the witness stand. There is not a man in the service of the people who may not be summoned on short notice before a committee to answer questions. The Secretary of War was investigated only the other day. The Food Commissioner was examined by a committee not very long ago. Mr. Daniels, of the Navy, has had his share of criticism, and Senator Chamberlain did not hesitate the other day to attack even the President of the United States. This is the democratic method. It was so in Athens twenty five hundred years ago; it was so in George Washington's day; and it ought to be so always. No man, much less a public man, should be deemed above criticism. No office, or position, or title, or profession, should make a man immune from criticism.

Criticism hurts the critic himself when it is hasty. Perhaps Chamberlain spoke before he was ready, or before he had finished his investigations. But even then his criticism gave Mr. Baker a chance to inform the country on many points concerning which the people were in the dark. Criticism, when based upon research and prompted by courage, instead of leading to controversy, barren and destructive, leads to reconciliation through the correction of the error, or the reform of the evil criticised.

While I was reading of the way congress turned the search-light upon every man, no matter who he may be, and upon everything, never mind how well established and by doing so, prevents dishonesty from masquerading as honesty, or inefficiency from usurping the prestige that belongs to merit—I wished we were equally enthusiastic about the benefits of agitation and criticism in religion. Unfortunately, the label *religious* on an institution, or on a person, completely disarms criticism. You may impeach a president, dethrone an emperor, or overthrow an autocracy, but where is the tribunal that can summon a pope, for example, to appear before it? And there is no man who deserves to be investigated in connection with the war more than the pope. But it is well for the pope that no such tribunal exists, for if it did, and he were placed on the witness stand and examined and cross-examined, as many a public official is,—and the workings of the system, of which he is the head, exposed—how long do you think the spiritual autocracy would last?

In the political world the men who command the attention of the nation are President Wilson, the two ex-presidents, Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft, and the frequent candidate for the presidency, Mr. Bryan. These men have many admirers and followers in the country, they are in the public eye and they command the public ear.

More than that, these men have power to do things. They say Mr. Bryan made Woodrow Wilson president. That would prove that he is a factor in the democratic party. Mr. Bryan has also a growing clientele in religious circles, and as the spokesman of the prohibition party—the apostle of the “Drys,” whose political power is on the increase, Mr. Bryan may yet be elected to the presidency.

Former President Taft is a quiet man, but he too has a considerable following, and he has never been busier than

since our country entered the war. He speaks frequently to audiences of business men, to the soldier boys at the various camps, and to large popular gatherings in the great cities. And he is the organizer and president of the League to Enforce Peace after Victory. Surely, he should be reckoned among the big men who are today moulding and directing American opinion. The country is indebted to William Howard Taft for the energy and intelligence with which he is serving the nation in this critical hour.

And no one will question that Theodore Roosevelt is, has been, and in all probability will be as long as he lives, a power in the country. We may not like him, or agree with him, but we have got to listen to him. We may not want to follow him, but he will not let us alone. That is a proof of personality and power. The man has convictions. He feels deeply. He is warm. He is alive. He is contagious. Even when he is wrong he is strong, because he is nothing in a half-hearted or lukewarm fashion. If he hates you, he hates you with all his might, and does not make a secret of it; if he is with you, you have in him a "bully" good friend.

The re-election of Woodrow Wilson to the presidency, despite the powerful combination against him could be cited as a proof of his prestige with the nation. He is looked up to for counsel and guidance not only by his own people, but by the nations across the seas. His words are translated into every language and repeated all over the world. It is not so much because he is the President of the United States, that Europe and Asia and Africa lift up their eyes to gaze upon him, as it is that he is Woodrow Wilson!

Surely it was not flattery when the newly appointed British ambassador, Earl Reading paid so warm and glowing a tribute to our president. "No human being," he said, "has the faculty of stating the true nature of our ideals as your president, the man who speaks for you." We Americans have a right to be proud of such a representative. To compliment Woodrow Wilson is to compliment the American people. "We in Europe" continues the ambassador, "have learned to look to those words of his and to cherish them as representing to us the unalterable determination of America, once it has commenced to war in vindication of right, never to sheathe the sword until it has conquered. We know that the words spoken by your president are words upon

which we can build. We do. They are messages of hope and comfort to us."

Whether rightly or wrongly, Mr. Wilson has come to be regarded as the cleanest man in world politics today. He is also believed to be one of the ablest. At any rate he has aroused high hopes in the breast of our stricken world.

Of course, I could mention the names of other men in other departments of life who loom big on the horizon in this anxious hour, but confining myself to the sphere of politics, I shall not go beyond the four names I have just mentioned.

I shall speak of President Wilson first, because he is the man of the hour. He is on the bridge of the ship of state; the others are on board only as passengers. Even Mr. Bryan is not one of the crew, for although he is of the same political faith as the president, he is out of office.

The important question in the minds of Messrs. Taft and Roosevelt and their coteries is "Can Captain Wilson save the ship? Does he understand navigation? Is he an experienced sailor?" On the other hand, what is agitating Wilson and giving him no little concern is the fear that his distinguished passengers and former sea-captains may insist upon meddling, which might demoralize or cripple the service and even lead to mutiny on board the ship in mid-ocean. Let me not forget to say that former President Taft has more than once expressed complete satisfaction with the way President Wilson is piloting the nation. But still he is of another party and did his best to elect Mr. Hughes to the presidency.

And perhaps Mr. Taft is mentally more in sympathy with Mr. Wilson than he is with Mr. Roosevelt. For example, Mr. Taft believes that a League of Nations could enforce peace. Mr. Wilson seems to share that opinion. Roosevelt, on the contrary, regards a League of Nations enforcing peace as a chimera. Universal disarmament is neither attainable nor is it desirable, according to Mr. Roosevelt. I am inclined to think that he is more practical on that question than the other gentlemen. The only way peace and friendship can be maintained is through international confidence, and that cannot be enforced. Moreover how is peace to be *enforced* if we are all disarmed? At best then an armed peace is all that a League of nations can promise. Of course, even that is preferable to war.

But how is peace of any kind to be *enforced*? And as already suggested, what are we to enforce it with if the nations are disarmed? And if a league of nations may enforce peace at the point of the bayonet why may it not also enforce a certain form of government or religion?

But the academic objections against a League of nations to *enforce* anything are not very serious after all; the real objections are of a practical nature. We have for a neighbor Mexico which, a great part of the time is in a state of disorder. Would we consent to submit the proposition to allow Japan or Germany the right to take Mexico in hand, with a view to restore order there—establish the industries and direct its finances, to an international court in which perhaps the representative of the Sultan of Turkey or of the Kaiser of Austria-Hungary will cast the deciding vote? It may be that it is not the intention of the sponsors of a League of Nations to submit such vital questions as are covered by the Monroe Doctrine to a court of arbitration. If so then a League of Nations can not be of any material help to us in real trouble.

There is a report that the Russians have demanded of our government to release Emma Goldman, Berkman, and Mooney of California who was convicted of murder. Is it the idea that this demand of the Bolsheviki should be submitted to an international tribunal? But that would mean that before we could enforce a sentence passed by our own courts we would have to consult the Bolsheviki in Russia, the Chamber of Deputies in France, the House of Commons in England, etc. What nation with red blood in its veins would submit to that? If the Bolsheviki have their way, the Supreme Court in Washington would not be our Supreme Court at all. The court of final appeals would be the one in which, as intimated, a Bolshevik or a Turk may cast the deciding ballot. Would it not be wiser for the Russians to settle their own affairs instead of dictating to other nations?

This does not mean that there are not hundreds of international questions which could be safely and profitably submitted to a central tribunal elected to act with authority. The success of arbitration has been more than once demonstrated. But since not all disputes can be so settled it follows that universal military service is indispensable to any nation that is jealous of her honor and sovereignty. These remarks

are offered not in criticism of the League of Nations idea, but only to shatter the illusion, if possible, that such a league will enable us to dispense with preparedness. The nation that prefers opiates and anodynes to banners and battle-cries is lost. "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" was the advice of the Arabian reformer; let us trust in the League of Nations to enforce peace and "keep our powder dry."

But President Wilson's most formidable rival is Theodore Roosevelt, and there is no denying the fact that while Taft and Wilson and Bryan could meet on a common ground, I do not think that Woodrow Wilson and Theodore Roosevelt could ever assimilate each other's political philosophy. They are two opposites. I am not suggesting that they are enemies. They are not. But they are two diametrically contrary natures. The phrase "watchful waiting" is Wilsonian. The word "bully" is Rooseveltian. Had the latter been president when the *Lusitania* was torpedoed, there is no doubt that we would not have waited nearly three years before breaking relations with that evil power. Of course, I am unable to say whether entering the war three years earlier would have been wiser, but my point is to illustrate the difference between the two temperaments.

Mr. Roosevelt is quicker to respond to his environment than Mr. Wilson. The former rushes on, the latter lingers. Mr. Roosevelt would have *led* us into war; with Mr. Wilson, it is we who *led* him to declare war. Mr. Wilson's conception of a great nation like America is, or was, that of a nation living as much as possible unto itself—free from what Washington described as entangling alliances, closeted and aloof from the noise and rattle of over-sea quarrels; Mr. Roosevelt's idea of a great nation is that of an active, aggressive, meddling power, everywhere present to defend the right and defeat the wrong. Mr. Wilson would have said, I do not think he will now, but his attitude at one time was, that so long as American territory was not invaded it was not any of our concern what they were fighting for in Europe. In one of his speeches in Congress in 1914, Mr. Wilson used the expression "It does not concern us," when speaking of the terrible conflict in Europe. It would be difficult to imagine a man of Roosevelt's endowment taking so academic a view of a world-war.

Our country is not only geographical, it is also moral. Ideas are just as much our country as soil, sand and sea. Institutions, civilization, liberty, the right—these are our moral possessions, they are property conquered, and to attack them is to attack America. Mr. Wilson's country has boundaries; Mr. Roosevelt's is the whole cosmos of law and honor!

It will be seen that it is not always Mr. Wilson who is the idealist, and Roosevelt the practical statesman. At the outbreak of the war, Mr. Wilson was bent upon saving the lives, the rights and the property of American citizens. That is practical statesmanship. Mr. Roosevelt, on the other hand, at once clamored for war against a ruthless enemy that made life, rights and property worthless so long as it remained the victor on the field of battle. That is idealism. And yet, America's experience has shown that under the circumstances his idealism was more practical than the strictly practical program of the president during the first years of the war.

One of the very first messages which Mr. Wilson delivered to the American people at the outbreak of the war contained the request that we be neutral—neutral even in our *thoughts*. Do you hear? It was indeed a most remarkable request. Not only were we to take no active part on one side or the other, not only were we to speak neither for Germans nor for the Allies,—but we were not even to *think* more of one than of the other belligerent. Mr. Wilson realizing how unprepared our country was for war, and fearing that our sympathies and antipathies, unless suppressed, might sweep us into the maelstrom, almost begged us to refrain even from thinking about the war. Our kinsmen across the water were in a life and death wrestle, but we were not even to think about it one way or another, but to go on mining coal, selling cotton, digging oil wells, and taking no pains to investigate the issues at stake, lest we should come to hold one side in the right and the other in the wrong. How extraordinary! And one would infer that the president did himself what he wished us to do, and remained neutral even in thought, like a god in alabaster. But I am not reminding you of this to prejudice you against him, but merely to disclose his point of view and his temperament. He wished for peace as the *summum bonum*, and to secure it, he was ready to shut our eyes, our ears, our minds, and to

silence our consciences as well as his own. If we could, as a nation have gone to sleep, like Rip Van Winkle, until the war was over, it would have pleased the president in 1914. But all this only shows the intensity with which President Wilson coveted peace.

In our criticisms of Woodrow Wilson it would be only fair to remember that he is president at a period which is the most critical thus far in the history of our republic. Washington, too, had great responsibilities as the first president of the country, but the war with England cannot be compared with the inhuman and barbaric methods Germany has introduced into the present war; nor did England, in 1776, entertain the ambitions which in 1918 Germany is seeking to realize in her efforts to dominate the world and destroy the rights of man. Moreover, when Washington became president, a victorious peace had finally been conquered by American arms. Abraham Lincoln had a heavier burden to carry during the civil war; but Wilson's burden is heavier still, because it is not only a very much stronger enemy that he is pitted against, but also an enemy who is three thousand miles from home.

Besides, the German and Irish intrigues in this country, and on a vast scale, greatly increased the difficulties of President Wilson's position. The Irish and German-Americans together represent effective political strength in the country. Their combined hatred against England blinded them to any virtues the president possessed. They did not thank Wilson for keeping us out of the war, because they wanted him also to prevent us from selling to the Allies or sailing on the seas. And now that we are at war, they like Wilson even less because of the fear that by defending America against Germany we might be indirectly helping England.

There is a tradition, I know not to what extent it can be depended upon,—that the democratic party has a larger following of Irish-Americans than any of the other parties. Observe in connection with this that many prominent Irish-Americans in New York and elsewhere openly and stoutly espoused the cause of Germany at the outbreak of the war. No doubt this element in the democratic party brought considerable pressure to bear upon the president during that long period of hesitation. One of the intercepted Bernstorff messages requested from the Kaiser a pro-Irish utterance,

which was to be used in this country to reward the Irish for their activities against the Allies. I believe the Kaiser counted on the support of the Irish-Americans almost as much as he did on that of the German-Americans. Together they were expected to keep America out of the war. Mr. Wilson had these unruly political friends to conciliate.

The pro-Germans insisted even after we entered the war that a way could be devised by which we could fight Germany without recognizing England as an ally. "We are willing to fight for America, but not for England," represented their attitude. Which meant that they did not want England to help us fight Germany, or to help us defend our country. It meant that they did not want the English fleet to protect our ships or transports—that is to say, they preferred to take greater chances against Germany, or to give to that country greater odds to sink our ships and invade our soil. To object to England for an ally is to make it easier for Germany to win the war. That is evident enough.

Suppose a German in Berlin were to say, "I like to fight for Germany, but not for Turkey." But if he fights for Germany will he not also be helping Turkey? Let me ask the anglophobe Irish this question: Do you want America to defeat Germany? If so, will not that help England? Tell me, then, how you expect to fight for America without fighting also for England. Why do you not have the honesty and courage to say you are for Germany, at heart? When you say you do not wish to be fighting for England, you really mean that you do not want to fight for America.

And what is this prejudice against England based upon? Why do people prefer Turkey, Bulgaria, Austria, to England? If England has her Ireland, has not Germany her Poland? The richer and progressive portion of Ireland is pro-British; can it be said that a large part of Poland is ready to fight not to be separated from Germany, as the north of Ireland is to remain in fellowship with England? The German propaganda against England is indirectly an attempt not only to divide the United States into hostile camps, but also to help prejudice our people against the English language,—English literature and English institutions and traditions, hoping thereby to draw us into the pan-German alliance. The main object of the anti-British propaganda is to Germanize the United States. To effect

this purpose, nothing seems to be too absurd to say against the English, even now, when English and American soldiers are fighting side by side in a common cause. But the anti-English feeling of the Irish and the Germans was so stubborn that any strong proof that the President favored the cause of the Allies would have made his election to the presidency for a second term impossible. In criticising, therefore, Mr. Wilson's earlier attitude toward the belligerents and his pacifist utterances we must be impartial enough to realize that he was practically compelled to win his fight against the pro-German pacifists in his own party before he could count on any strong support for his policies.¹

¹ About six months after we had entered the war, pro-German publications were still calling upon the president to "strafe England." In the August (1917) issue of *The Open Court*, edited by a man born in Germany, an article appeared entitled "English Diplomacy."

The present world-war, in the opinion of this German-American editor, was provoked by England to make a *rapprochement* between Germany and America impossible. "England has a high contempt for America and American efficiency," says *The Open Court*, "but the main point even now is not so much to gain the United States as an ally for herself as to alienate the United States and Germany not only for the present but for all time to come."

These weighty and damning conclusions are based on what the editor read, many years ago, in an English newspaper, the name of which he does not give—that Great Britain was willing to let Germany lay the foundations of a colonial empire in South America. Of course, the English were well aware that our Monroe Doctrine would not permit a German invasion of this continent, but then the English, suggests *The Open Court*, did not care a button for the Monroe Doctrine. What they were after was to make Germany and America enemies.

The responsibility for this carnival of blood lies at the door of "English Diplomacy," concludes the editor of *The Open Court*. I think what he would like to say, but is not bold enough to say it is that, if England had remained neutral, Germany would have quickly crushed France and Russia, and the war would have been over in three months, which benevolent German program was defeated by the interference of the hated Britishers.

It is also intimated by this "patriotic" editor of German descent that the revolution in Russia was another English manoeuver. By bringing about a political upheaval in that vast empire, the ancient enemy of Great Britain, the latter hoped to eliminate Russia as an imperialistic competitor after the war. Russia crippled would give England a free hand in India. Still another motive in fomenting revolution, or at least in causing demoralization in the Russian armies, was to furnish England with an excuse for losing the war. In the event of defeat at the hands of the central powers England could throw the entire blame upon the Russian fiasco. "A second Daniel come to judgment!" one exclaims, after reading the article on "English Diplomacy" in "*The Open Court*."

But perhaps an even more difficult situation for Mr. Wilson was created by his pacifist Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan, to whom report says, he owed his election. Mr. Bryan too represented quite a large following in the democratic party, and his being appointed Secretary of State was in recognition of his services in a political way. But Mr. Bryan was even more wrong on the question of the war than he was on the sixteen to one formula. He got over his bi-metalism, but it is doubtful if he will ever shed his pacifism. It is true he is now anxious to see America win, but that does not mean that he has had a change of heart. Mr. Wilson had the misfortune of Mr. Bryan's mental comradeship during the most critical stages of our parley with Berlin. The final separation, when Mr. Bryan resigned, came as the climax of a struggle on the part of the president to shake off the Bryan brand of pacifism which caught the administration in its strangling embrace. From that day on Mr. Wilson was a stronger man.

Mr. Bryan may be likened to a man who, in order to see things as he wants to see them, closes his eyes that he may not see things as they really are. What Mr. Bryan dislikes most is facts. He had a *papier mache* world in which shadows took the place of flesh and blood people, and *whim* took the place of the law of cause and effect. It was his advice to the president to keep on sending notes to the Kaiser, to keep on protesting. Some day the protest will take effect said Mr. Bryan. It would. If you keep on praying for rain, you will get rain reason's Bryan. He is right, the drought cannot last forever. It is the same with the war. Keep on protesting and we will have peace. "Between friends," says Mr. Bryan again, "there is no last word,"—the idea being that we should keep on exchanging notes as long as ink and paper hold out. Between friends there is not even a *first* word,—but how about between America and a government that insists on sinking American ships and drowning American citizens? Is it Bryan's idea that Germany should go on sinking and we keep on protesting? And Bryan was at one time Secretary of State! "But we have no enemies," replies the pacifist. That is just what the ostrich said, after he had buried his head deep in the sand.

Another unforgettable remark of Bryan's, while he was officially connected with the administration, was that "It

is not our affair how the belligerents fight." He said this to influence the president in the wording of his note against ruthless submarine warfare. Yet Mr. Bryan thinks it is his affair to find out what his neighbors drink, or what god the Chinese worship; but he does not care how brutal or barbaric is the conflict in Europe. Is it not strange? I am scandalized when I think of the pope's silence,— of his failure to condemn German outrages upon women and children and the way they massacred non-combatants. But the pope's silence is not a circumstance to the declaration of an American statesman, many times a candidate for the highest office in the land, Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson, a reformer by profession etc., that "it is not our affair how the belligerents fight." Mr. Bryan can calmly watch the Germans sink without warning as many passenger boats as they can torpedo,—see them commit rape, massacre a whole nation and show no more respect for the rights of man than for a rag! Why should he care, these things are happening three thousand miles from home! Mr. Bryan seemed to be prepared to sacrifice conscience, honor, humanity, religion, morality—to his pacifism. Was there ever such idolatry!

It was also a favorite theme with the former Secretary of State to advise Americans to keep away from the danger zone prescribed by Germany. Of course, the Americans had the right, Mr. Bryan argued, to sail the seas, but he cautioned them strongly against doing so. Rather than that this country should go to war, let the few Americans deny themselves the right of going to Europe or of crossing the ocean. This was Bryan's solution of the trouble with Germany. It was an easy solution "Let a few Americans sacrifice a few of their rights."

But the German order was not against a few Americans venturing across the sea; it was, on the contrary an order excluding *all* Americans from the ocean. Will Mr. Bryan note that?

Moreover, the German order did not state that Americans went into the danger zone at their own peril, as one would who ventures too close to a conflagration; but it said plainly that they would be deliberately, not accidentally,—but deliberately—killed if they did. There is a great difference between saying to people: "There is a big fire up the street, and if you try to go near it, you might lose your life; and saying. "We have started a big fire over there and if

you come anywhere near it, we will kill you." Germany did not say to us "You cross the ocean at your own risk," but "You cross the ocean under penalty of death."

Mr. Bryan might still ask "Would it not have been more prudent to have minded the Kaiser's warning and given up the ocean to him than to be thus dragged into war?" Many pacifists and pro-Germans are still asking that question. Let us see:

It never seems to have occurred to these "idealists" that if one nation may order us off the sea, another would have the right to order us to sea. If Germany may forbid us to trade with the Allies, the Allies have the right to forbid us to do Germany's bidding. And if we take Mr. Bryan's advice and keep off the seas, in order to avoid a war with Germany, by the same reasoning we should follow the advice of those who would have us trade with the Allies in order to keep at peace with them. But how can we obey Germany without offending the Allies, or obey the Allies without offending Germany? And slaves cannot choose their masters.

It would follow that Bryan's solution was not a guarantee of peace at all, for if we escaped the enmity of the Germans by allowing them to dictate to us, we could only avoid the enmity of the Allies by giving them the same privilege. But we cannot both be on and off the ocean—both trade and not trade with Europe. If we did not fight Germany we would have to fight Great Britain and France. The English fleet would have been just as irresistible as the German submarine. What would lecturer Bryan have advised us to do with the British fleet bombarding New York?

Bryan practically advised the nation to surrender to the strongest among the belligerents. He deemed that cheaper than fighting for freedom and honor. Shades of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln! With Bryan at the helm, how long would the flag wave over the land of the free and the home of the brave!

In his lecture on "The Value of An Ideal," which Mr. Bryan has delivered hundreds of times in eloquent accents and with a flow of words, occurs the following strange pronouncement:

"Instead of trying to make our navy the largest in the world, let us try to make our government the best government on earth. Instead of trying to make our flag float

everywhere, let us make it stand for justice wherever it floats—for justice between man and man, for justice between nation and nation. And then the people of the world will learn to know and revere that flag because it will be their protection as well as ours. And then if any king raises his hand against our flag, the oppressed people of his own land will rise up and say to him, "Hands off! That flag stands for our rights as well as the rights of the American people!"

What a dreamer! This is the same easy speaker who predicted that "a million men would spring to arms between sunset and sunrise, etc." Evidently he has never heard the maxim "Trust in God and keep your powder dry" which I have already quoted, or "The good God is always on the side of strong battalions," or "God helps those who help themselves." Mr. Bryan's God is more generous; he helps the dreamers. Indeed, Mr. Bryan was something of a millstone around the neck of the administration. With the elimination of his influence or "atmosphere" there was noticed a decided improvement in the state department.

The man who is president today is a totally different Woodrow Wilson. He has shaken off Bryanism and pacifism, and is determined to win the war for America and the cause of civilization. Read his address to Congress, on December 4, 1917: "When shall we consider the war won? We shall regard the war only as won when the German people say to us through properly accredited representatives that they are ready to agree to a settlement based upon justice and the reparation of the wrongs their rulers have done."

There is neither neutrality nor uncertainty in that clarion utterance. The President holds fast to the real war aims which justified our entrance into the European conflict—the defeat of militarism and the triumph of reason. "Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, of money, or of materials, is being devoted, and will continue to be devoted, to that purpose until it is achieved."

Mr. Wilson's education has been both rapid and thorough. It proves there was splendid material in him. It is true he began as a neutral, and failed to see the bearing or the trend of events crowding fast upon us; it is true he spoke of the European nations as being "war-mad," which was a great slight upon France, upon Belgium, upon England, upon Serbia, which had done everything to avoid war; it is

also true that he asked for peace without victory, and did not know what the war was about, etc., but *that* Mr. Wilson is no more. No man is infallible, and many of the acts of the administration are open to criticism, but "by taking much thought Woodrow Wilson has added cubits to his mental and moral stature." He has rapidly risen in the love and confidence of the whole civilized world. He is today the star actor in the greatest drama ever staged. International good-will finds in our president an eloquent spokesman. The cause of human progress looks to him for the word that sheds light and the blow that vindicates right. It was purely by the power of clear thinking that Mr. Wilson emerged from the fog of pacifism. His intellect saved him and the nation from shipwreck. His strong will will beat Germany to her knees.¹

I believe in men who can change. In that respect Mr. Wilson has the advantage over Mr. Roosevelt. The latter made a mistake about a great American, some years ago, but he persists in his unjust opinion of Thomas Paine in the very teeth of the evidence.² Mr. Wilson is more teachable.

¹ There is absolutely no excuse for such attacks on the administration as appeared in a recent issue of the Metropolitan Magazine, by Mr. Hard.

² When I returned from Washington, where I had gone to see President Roosevelt in reference to his attack on Thomas Paine, I said that if Mr. Roosevelt will not see merit in Thomas Paine, we can see the high qualities of Mr. Roosevelt. He has indeed shown qualities of a very high order in his denunciation of German might and defense of outraged Belgium, Serbia, France, and Armenia. I am proud of the following letter which I wrote a few weeks ago because it shows that when I criticise anyone I do so without any malice:

Editor, Truth Seeker.

Dear Sir:—

Your original reference to Theodore Roosevelt and Emma Goldman, in a late issue of the Truth Seeker, was very unfortunate. Your reply to your Denver correspondent, in this week's issue, in which you renew your attack upon Theodore Roosevelt and hold him to be less worthy of your esteem than Emma Goldman was more than I could endure in silence. In my opinion you owe Rationalism an apology. By publicly comparing an American president with a woman of the type of Emma Goldman to the disadvantage of the former you have placed all Rationalists under a cloud. I am not going to argue with you about the merits or demerits of the persons involved. If you can't see the difference between Theodore Roosevelt and Emma Goldman, no arguments will avail. To shut your eyes so as to become blind to the worth of a man like Theodore Roosevelt simply because he has committed a wrong against Thomas Paine is

I have heard the remark that a man who has been a pacifist once, like Wilson, or his present Secretary of War, Baker, could not be a good leader in a time of war. That suggests the basis of the recent criticism in Congress of the administration. That is what might be called, *apriori* criticism. Wilson was a pacifist, Baker was a pacifist, *ergo*, they are not the proper persons to win a war. But that argument is like a two-edged sword, it will hurt the man who uses it as much as it is expected to hurt the man against whom it is used. If a peace-lover is not qualified to be president or secretary of war in war times, then a war-like man is not qualified to be president in peace-times.

Until I was about twenty-five, I was a devout Calvinist. I believed in the tenets of orthodoxy. I was an ordained clergyman. Does that fact make me unfit to serve the cause of Rationalism, or to represent and expound its beautiful teachings? It is true I believed at one time the very opposite of what I stand for now, but then, I am not the same man. I have, I believe, developed, matured, experienced a re-birth. You would not be justified to withhold support from me because once I was a Calvinist. Not to believe in change is to deny progress. To see in the Wilson of today the Wilson of 1914 is to confess that all our efforts to educate and enlighten are a failure, because what men are today they will be tomorrow. What is the use then of propaganda, or education, or the printed word, if men and minds can never be changed? But if they can be, why not gladly give Woodrow Wilson credit for his conversion? The Catholics have a saying, "once a Catholic, always a Catholic." In all probability when the Catholics

to prove yourself a sectarian of a very antiquated type. What is the difference between a man who will not see anything good in you, or true in your teaching, simply because you do not believe in his *Jesus*, and one who will prefer Emma Goldman to Roosevelt because the latter does not believe in Thomas Paine?

You know how I have fought Roosevelt for his injustice to Thomas Paine; but I am glad that if I could blame him for his unfairness to a great American I can also commend him for his loyalty to the cause of humanity and his magnificent courage in denouncing the infamies of the most powerful "blood and iron" man in the world. That you should ask that Roosevelt be muzzled and Emma Goldman given freedom to betray the nation and make a "Bolshevik Russia" of this country was, to me, a bitter disappointment.

Very truly,

M. M. MANGASARIAN.

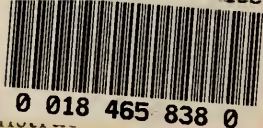
count their membership they include also those who at one time belonged to that church but who are no longer affiliated with it, on the plea that "once a Catholic always a Catholic." But that is absurd. Once all Europe was Catholic. Will anyone maintain that England, Scotland, France, the Scandinavian countries, Holland, etc., are still Catholic? Many of you were formerly sectarians, now you are in the all-embracing fellowship of freedom. If you could change, honestly, radically, consistently, why not the president?

You will observe that I am not allowing party considerations to influence my attitude. That Mr. Wilson is a democrat instead of a republican means nothing to me. But I want him to remember too that as president, he is an American before he is the spokesman of the democratic party. Therefore, in my opinion, the president should not hesitate to invite capable men of the other political parties to share with him the responsibilities of the hour. This is not the war of the democratic party alone; it is the nation's war, and the services of experts, irrespective of political affinities, should be commandeered. A coalition government, or at least an inter-party war council, composed of the strongest men the country can offer, would not only be the real American way of doing things, but it would also be the best way to unify and consolidate the nation behind the president. *England and France* have risen above all party lines, why should not we?

Considering everything, the present administration has done well. Secretary Baker and his critic Chamberlain are beginning to understand each other better. Let us gladly give Mr. Wilson credit, not only for his courage in changing from hesitation to decision, but also for the force and weight he has been able to put in the American "punch." He is now ready to hit, and to hit hard, notwithstanding that the war is three thousand miles from our shores, and that we have been a peace-loving and unprepared nation.

But the Democrats alone can not win the war. The Republicans alone cannot. All the parties should pull together. It would be a splendid exhibition of patriotism for Mr. Wilson to recognize Mr. Roosevelt, Mr. Taft and other Americans, by inviting their cooperation. Such a course would have made Senator Stone's partisan speech and

Senator Chamberlain's attack on the administration possible.



Both Roosevelt and Taft are splendid Americans—loyal, fearless, sane. From the very first these gentlemen have been right on the subject of the war. Their courage in denouncing the iniquities of a most popular and powerful enemy does great credit both to their heart and head. Let Mr. Wilson take counsel with Taft and Roosevelt. It will inspire the whole nation with confidence to see love of country and recognition of merit rise high above partisanship and ancient political grievances. Bury the hatchet, gentlemen. The country expects great things of you. Let President Wilson, besides his own splendid service to the country, utilize also the brains of the big men of America, irrespective of party, and who will hesitate to proclaim him the Strong Man of the War in America today!

Mr. President :-

Courage and strength to you in these trying hours is my hearty wish. You are doing your task with a foresight and brain power that is a wonder and pride to the whole world. Congratulations and best wishes.

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R. H. Harris

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